



Frequently Asked Questions About Lead and Arsenic in your Neighborhood

Vasquez Boulevard and Interstate 70 Superfund Site (VB/I-70)

July 2004

For more information, please contact:

Ms. Pat Courtney, U.S. EPA
Community Involvement
303-312-6631

Ms. Jennifer Chergo, U.S. EPA
Community Involvement
303-312-6601

Derek Boer, CO Dept. of Public Health
and Environment
Community Involvement
303-692-3329

Spanish Speaking Hotline
303-312-6384
Se habla español

Web site:
<http://www.epa.gov/region08/superfund/sites/co/vbi70.html>

Or visit our information centers at:

Cross Community Coalition
2332 East 46th Street, Denver

Valdez-Perry Library
4690 Vine Street, Denver

Ford Warren Library
2835 High Street, Denver

EPA Records Center,
999 18th Street, 3rd floor
Denver, CO
or, visit the Web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region08/s>

INTRODUCTION

The Vasquez Boulevard & Interstate 70 Superfund Site (VB/I-70) includes all or portions of several northeast Denver neighborhoods: Elyria, Swansea, Cole, Clayton, southwest Globeville, and a small section of Curtis Park.

EPA is removing residential soils in *some yards* within the VB/I-70 Superfund site because these area yards have too much lead and/or arsenic in the soil. EPA is replacing these yards with new soil, re-landscaping, and funding a multi-agency, community-inspired health program for area residents.

Lead and arsenic are heavy metals left over from years of industrial and residential activities. Elevated levels of lead and arsenic can cause health problems in some residents.

The purpose of this fact sheet is to answer questions and address concerns you may have about the cleanup.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why are some yards in my neighborhood being cleaned up but others are not?

Not all yards need to be cleaned up. Only about 850 of the 4,000 yards in the area have levels of lead and/or arsenic high enough to require a cleanup.

We discovered that it is very common for one yard to have high levels of lead and/or arsenic and the yard next door to have very low levels. (*Please see map on last page which shows the random nature of the contamination*). We believe this is at least partly because of the source of the contamination and the history of the property. Information indicates that one of the sources of arsenic in yards may be from lawn care products that were readily available for use in the 1950s and 1960s.

How can I get my soil sampled?

If your yard has not been sampled or you don't know if it has been sampled and want to find out, please contact us at our site coordination office at 303-487-0377. *EPA will sample your property for free.*

If my yard does not need a cleanup why does the grass look unhealthy?

If your yard does not need to be cleaned up the levels of lead and arsenic are not high enough to cause damage to your lawns, trees, or landscaping. If your grass appears unhealthy and you don't require a cleanup there may be other problems with it. To learn how you can improve the health of your lawn/landscaping, please contact CSU extension service, Master Gardener for a free consultation at 720-913-5278.

What will happen if my yard does need a cleanup?

If your yard needs a cleanup, EPA will contact you by mail in advance and will set up an appointment to discuss a cleanup plan for your yard. The cleanup will occur after you agree with the cleanup plan.

How long will the cleanup take?

Soil removal and replacement on average usually takes about two days. Landscaping your yard generally is completed within two weeks.

What is the Community Health Program?

The Community Health Program is a unique program being designed by local, Federal and State government representatives and committed community leaders.

1. The program will help raise awareness in the community about how to protect children from lead and arsenic hazards.
2. The program will test children to find out if a child a high level of lead and/or arsenic in his or her body.
3. If a child has a high level of lead and/or arsenic in his or her body, the program is designed to help identify where the lead and/or arsenic is coming from. If the yard has a high lead and/or arsenic level, that yard will have the soil removed as soon as possible.

EPA is planning to have the Community Health Program services available in the fall of 2004.

For more information on the Community Health Program and how to be involved, please contact Beverly Tafoya- Dominguez, City of Denver at 720-865-5471.

How are we doing?

Some residents may receive a questionnaire in the mail this summer. It asks you to tell us how we are doing. Please take a minute to fill the questionnaire out and mail it in the return envelope. Your feedback is very important to us. This questionnaire will help us to know if we are doing a good job of keeping you informed.